

**Colorado Department of Labor and Employment  
Performance Pay Program  
Implementation Plan  
Effective: April 1, 2007**

**1. Purpose and Basis**

The CDLE Performance Pay Program establishes a management system that will create an ongoing increase in productivity by clearly defining mission and goals, improving communication, recognizing improved performance and rewarding employees based on their accomplishments. The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) Performance Pay System (PPS) Implementation Plan is based on CRS 24-50-104 and other applicable statutes, the Performance Pay System plan published by the Executive Oversight Committee on August 31, 2000 with subsequent revisions and Personnel Board Rules and Personnel Director's Administrative Procedures.

**2. Methodology**

- a. To ensure employee input the CDLE Management Team established employee action groups in the areas of Planning and Implementation, Dispute Resolution Process, Communications, and Training. The groups built detailed recommendations designed to increase employee acceptance.
- b. Appointing Authorities and designated raters are responsible for communicating the department's performance management component to their employees. The Office of Human Resources and the Office of Staff Development teach classes and do consulting to assist the management staff in this function.
- c. The Management Team also established a steering committee to monitor the implementation of the plan, oversee the quality of the performance pay program and make recommendations on a regular basis. The current steering committee includes Don Peitersen, Director of the CDLE Division of Employment and Training, Glenda Barry, CDLE Director of the Office of Human Resources (OHR), Aaron Wishon, Director of the Information Management Office, Wayne Peel, Budget Manager, Shannon Weston, Chief of CDLE Staff Development, and Mike Dawson, Human Resources Employee Relations Manager.

**3. Timelines and milestones**

- a. The first step in the performance management process is the development of a strategic plan by the department management team. Updates to this plan, if necessary, will be complete by the end of August each year in conjunction with the budget submission to the Office of State Planning and Budget. Divisions will develop their own business plans based on the department strategic plan. Work units will develop plans

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based on their next higher level's plan. By February 1<sup>st</sup> the unit planning cycle will be completed and individuals/ teams may begin drafting performance plans.

b. There are a number of goals to be accomplished during the development of the individual performance plan. The foremost includes an open communication regarding what is to be completed during the plan year, the priorities for completion and how the work is to be done. The second main goal is that the process will be a learning experience for the employee, supervisor and reviewer. The mutual understanding accomplished by this communication and the focus on objectives/competencies that support the organization mission are crucial to the efficiencies brought about by performance management. The plan is not an end in itself. It is a working document to improve efficiency of operations during the year.

In general terms, the process begins when an experienced employee makes the first draft of the individual performance plan and presents it for approval to the supervisor/ manager (the rater.) This first meeting should happen during March. There may be additional planning sessions but the rater should submit the plan for the reviewer's examination and possible modifications before returning the completed plan to the employee. The reviewer is the direct manager of the rater. Even at this point there may be additional changes. The plan should be implemented by April 1<sup>st</sup>.

The supervisor/ manager is responsible for the timely completion of these steps. The supervisor/ manager will impose a plan if the subordinate does not complete the plan or agreement cannot be reached on a plan on time. Responsibility will fall on the reviewer if the supervisor/ manager fails to meet the deadline. If both these parties fail to produce a plan by May 1<sup>st</sup>, the reviewer's supervisor is responsible for completing the plan and on up the chain of command until the plan is completed as required by law. Disputes over the plan should be settled during the month of April. Disputed plans will be settled and implemented no later than May 1<sup>st</sup>. (See "Dispute Resolution Guidelines")

Supervisors will prepare plans for inexperienced employees (as a rule of thumb, this would mean an employee in the job less than three months but circumstances will vary depending on job complexity and prior experience of the employee.)

The statewide performance cycle is April 1 through March 31. A minimum of one in-progress review must be conducted during the plan year, preferably at the half-way mark, during the month of October. We recommend plan progress and the possibility of needed changes be reviewed each quarter.

c. Proposed evaluations will be completed by employees/ teams and presented to supervisors no later than March 31<sup>st</sup>. It is recognized that many plans will be completed before March 31<sup>st</sup> and evaluations of those plans should be conducted as soon as practicable. **Supervisors/Managers must consult with reviewers before presenting the final evaluation to their employees.** Appointing authorities must conduct a review process to monitor the quality and consistency of performance ratings within their agency before final ratings are provided to employees. After final evaluations with employees/

teams are conducted the scores should be submitted to the Office of Human Resources (OHR) by May 1<sup>st</sup>. If the supervisor/ manager fails to evaluate the plan by May 1<sup>st</sup> then the reviewer is responsible for completing the evaluation. If neither the supervisor/ manager nor the reviewer does an evaluation by May 15<sup>th</sup> then the reviewer's supervisor is responsible for completing the evaluation and on up the chain of command until the rating is completed as required by law. If a rating is not given, the overall evaluation is satisfactory until a final rating is completed. Recommendations for Level 3 evaluations are also due to OHR by May 15<sup>th</sup>. The lack of a plan or rating can be appealed through the Dispute Resolution System. Classified supervisors/ managers who fail to evaluate their employees by July 1 are subject to action under CRS 24-50-104. Absent extraordinary circumstances, failure to plan and evaluate in accordance with the department's established timelines results in a corrective action and ineligibility for a performance salary adjustment. If the individual performance plan or evaluation is not completed within 30 days of the corrective action, the designated rater shall be disciplinarily suspended in increments of one workweek following the pre-disciplinary meeting.

d. Prior to the payment of annual performance salary adjustments, the state Director of Personnel will specify and publish the percentage **ranges** for performance levels based on the available **statewide** performance pay fund. CDLE has not established any quota or forced distribution process for determining the number of ratings in any of the three performance levels.

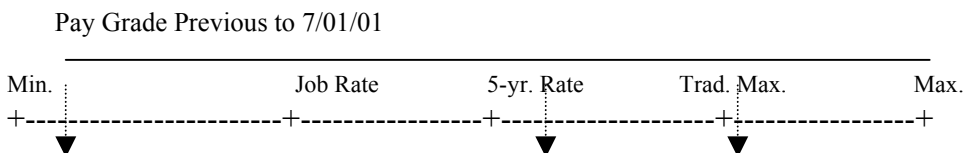
e. The Department will report required information (e.g. distribution of ratings, distribution of performance salary adjustments, number of disputes) to the Division of Human Resources by a date specified by DPA.

#### 4. Performance Pay

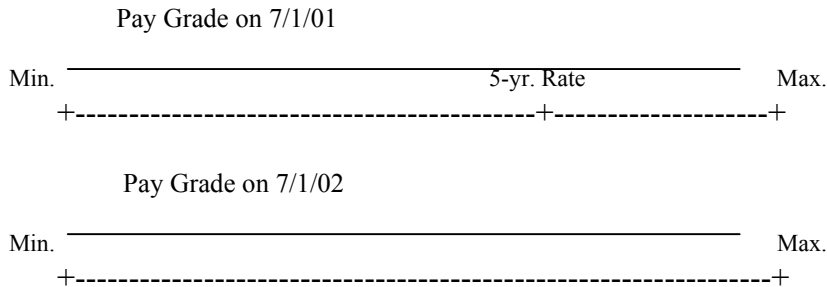
##### a. CDLE Method of Allocation

All employees in equivalent circumstances will receive equivalent pay treatment. As a result there will be no special allocation of funds among divisions except as necessary to balance monies received through program funding from State and Federal sources. All appropriated monies will be distributed.

Job rate and old maximum were eliminated as of July 1, 2001. Traditional maximum became the new maximum and continues to be the limit on base salary in a grade. The 5-year rate was retained for fiscal year 01-02 but was never used in calculating a performance pay payout.



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Pay between the minimum and the maximum is base pay. The change in pay grade structure affects salary calculations because the maximum is the comparison point in determining the type of movement and salary limitations. For example, the limit on base salary for hires, upward and lateral movements will be the maximum of the range. The maximums of the current and new pay grades will determine whether a movement is upward, downward, or lateral. The limit on saving current base salary for non-disciplinary and disciplinary demotions is the maximum of the new pay grade.

Anniversary increases ceased as of June 30, 2002. Performance salary adjustments began with the July, 2002 pay period. Until that time, eligible employees continued to receive anniversary increases for one last fiscal year (FY 01-02).

Employees hired on, or after, July 1, 2001, do **not** have anniversary dates **for pay purposes**. This includes former employees who were rehired during fiscal year 01-02. Employees as of 7/1/01 retained anniversary dates for one more fiscal year and then current provisions continued to apply, e.g., adjustments for leave-without-pay.

b. Award Eligibility and Distribution

Employees who are rated as satisfactory or above are eligible for a performance salary adjustment. Awards for employees who received a salary increase during the fiscal year and new employees will be prorated based on the fiscal year. For example, a person hired on October 1 would be given nine twelfths of a full increment for whatever rating level they attained. If a person worked here less than three months, the highest rating that person could achieve would be a Level 2. The reason is that there is just not enough time to give that person a competitive rating. Employees must have a final performance review and final rating, and be employed in the state personnel system on July 1 to be eligible for payment of performance salary adjustments. Employees who received a performance evaluation in another department before transferring into CDLE will have that evaluation used in the computation of their PPS score and receive performance salary adjustments under the provisions of the CDLE plan.

**For employees whose current salary is within the pay range, the performance salary adjustment will be base building, that is, will be added to the employee's base pay. Base building increases are permanent increases and continue as part of the employees' pay from the effective date forward.**

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If salary is at the maximum of the pay range (or in saved pay above the maximum) and overall performance is Level 2, the employee is not eligible for a performance salary adjustment. An employee whose current salary is at the maximum of the range and overall performance is Level 3 (outstanding), will be granted a one-time lump sum award. One-time lump sum awards are paid in the July payroll. Further information about one-time lump sum awards is covered in paragraph 4.d.

An employee granted a performance salary adjustment will not be denied the adjustment because of a corrective or disciplinary action issued for an incident after the close of the previous performance cycle.

c. **Rating Procedures**

Within an individual or team plan the rating scale for each objective is: “1” indicates failure to meet the objective or competency; “2” indicates meeting the objective or competency; and “3” indicates exceeding the objective or competency. The ratings of each objective/ competency are then weighted according to their importance to achieve a maximum possible point total of three hundred. A score of one hundred ninety-nine or less indicates the employee “needs improvement” (not eligible for a performance salary adjustment.) Point totals for Level 2 (“Satisfactory”) will be 200 to 300. Selection of Level 3 (“Outstanding”) will be done by the department Management Team. There are no quotas or forced distribution processes for determining the number or percentages of employees in any of the three performance levels.

In accordance with Personnel Rule 6-4 (G), three ratings levels instead of four will be used effective for the performance cycle beginning April 1, 2007. The definition of the former level 4 rating will now apply to the level 3 rating definition. The definitions of the former levels 2 and 3 have been combined to create the new level 2 rating definition. The level 1 rating definition is unchanged. The standard definitions will be as follows:

**Definition of Level 3**

This rating represents consistently exceptional and documented performance or consistently superior achievement beyond the regular assignment. Employees make exceptional contribution(s) that have a significant and positive impact on the performance of the unit or the organization and may materially advance the mission of the organization. The employee provides a model for excellence and helps others to do their jobs better. Peers, immediate supervision, higher-level management and others can readily recognize such a level of performance.

**Definition of Level 2**

This rating level encompasses a range of expected performance. It includes employees who are successfully developing in the job, employees who exhibit competency in work behaviors, skills, and assignments, and accomplished performers who consistently exhibit the desired competencies effectively and independently. These employees are meeting all the expectations, standards, requirements, and objectives on their performance plan and, on occasion, exceed them. This is the employee who reliably performs the job assigned

and may even have a documented impact beyond the regular assignments and performance objectives that directly supports the mission of the organization.

### **Definition of Level 1**

This rating level encompasses those employees whose performance does not consistently and independently meet expectations set forth in the performance plan as well as those employees whose performance is clearly unsatisfactory and consistently fails to meet requirements and expectations.

Marginal performance requires substantial monitoring to achieve consistent completion of work, and requires more constant, close supervision. Though these employees do not meet expectations, they may be progressing satisfactorily toward a level 2 rating and need to demonstrate improvement in order to satisfy the core expectations of the position.

Level 3, the “Outstanding” level (informally called “Peak Performer”) is unique and difficult to achieve because it represents consistently exceptional performance or achievement beyond the regular assignment. CDLE employees will be eligible to be considered for the rating of “Outstanding” by meeting at least one of the following two sets of criteria and being forwarded by their appointing authority for review and approval by the Department Management Team: consistently exceeding performance standards and/or making a significant contribution that is unique or unusual. For purposes of this review the Management Team will be facilitated by a designated Division Director. The intent is for the Executive Director to act as an independent reviewing authority and further enhance equitability in the system. The rating supervisor/ manager will compose a narrative explaining the employee’s accomplishment and forwarding it through the work unit management team to the appointing authority. The work unit management team will review the recommended evaluation and narrative to decide if the submission meets the standard of equitability within the work unit. Employees whose performance rating is at or above 275 **may** be recommended for “Level 3” under either set of criteria. Employees whose performance rating is less than 275 may qualify only under criteria b. Supervisors must use these criteria during the planning process to ensure the employee understands what constitutes “Level 3”. Under this system there is no arbitrary limit to the number of employees who can achieve the “Level 3” rating. Employees receiving a “needs improvement” rating in any objective or competency are not eligible for nomination to “Level 3.”

#### **(a) Consistently exceeding performance expectations**

Under this criterion, “Level 3” performers consistently exceed standards in their objectives and competencies including the core competencies. This consistent, exceptional performance is maintained throughout the duration of the rating period. Employees recommended for “Level 3” must consistently exceed performance expectations in at least five of the following ten areas:

1. Taking the initiative to identify and complete unassigned work that contributes to the mission of the organization.
2. Volunteering and achieving success in solving problems and perform work outside their scopes of responsibility.

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3. Exerting persistent effort above and beyond what is expected in order to meet business objectives.
4. Trying new solutions with an aggressive, go-getter attitude.
5. Completing work objectives ahead of schedule.
6. Completing work objectives using fewer financial resources, personnel, equipment or other resources than allocated.
7. Putting extra effort into improving work processes and/or exceeding product specifications.
8. Exceeding customer expectations regarding the quality of service provided.
9. Operating as team players by assisting others in accomplishing their work objectives.
10. Exceptionally high production levels within a measurable activity.

Employees with a point total at or above 275 on the Individual Performance Plan will be eligible for consideration for “Level 3” unless, and except for unusual circumstances, the evaluation includes a “needs improvement” rating in any objective or competency. Under this criterion of “Level 3” employees **consistently** perform at this higher level on a project-after project, activity-after activity basis across most objectives and competencies.

(b) Making a significant contribution that is unique or unusual.

Under this criterion of “Level 3” employees make a unique or unusual contribution that **significantly** advances the mission of the organization. The selected employee meets performance expectations in most objectives and competencies but may exceed performance expectations in a single objective or competency during the rating period. This unique or unusual contribution provides a **significant** benefit to the organization. Any supervisor/ manager may submit any employee for consideration as an “Outstanding” under (b) provided the employee is not under a corrective action or performance improvement plan. Supervisors and employees must alert one another whenever a significant contribution is about to commence, is in progress or has occurred. Examples of a unique contribution that may contribute to a rating of “Outstanding” include:

1. Exceptionally high production levels within a measurable activity.
2. Innovation of or improvement to a process that contributes significantly to increased quality, effectiveness or efficiency.
3. Design and implementation of product enhancements that significantly improve the flexibility, safety, or ease of use of that product.
4. Identification and implementation of an important new technology.
5. Exceptional response to an unforeseen event.

A single unique or unusual contribution during a rating period does not necessarily provide sufficient evidence for a “Level 3” rating. Other aspects of the employee’s performance are also taken into consideration when determining the final performance. Adequate documentation for a contribution under criterion b. will need to be presented at the time of review at the rating official level.

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d. CDLE will perform individualized prorating of increases for employees who have not completed a fiscal year with the department as of July 1.

To distribute 100% of the money allocated for PPS increases, we are using an automated program originally devised at the Department of Revenue and upgraded for our use by Ralph Price in CDLE's IMO. All awards below pay range maximum are base building. Awards in excess of pay range maximum will be awarded only to employees attaining a "Level 3" rating and those awards will be one-time lump sums. Employees attaining a "Level 3" rating may have a base-building award and a one-time lump sum award if their award exceeds the base range on their individual wage scale. Employees will be notified of the amount of their award and if it is base building and/or a one-time lump sum prior to the July pay date. Performance salary adjustments will be a percentage of salary, effective on the statewide common date of July 1. The employee must be employed on July 1 to receive payment of an adjustment. Source of funds, method of funding, and length of state service will not be used as criteria for distinguishing between one-time lump sum awards and base-building performance salary adjustments. One-time lump sum awards that are granted will be paid in full, even if the employee terminates employment after July 1.

e. Fairness in rating

A great deal of work went into devising the performance evaluation system to be as fair and objective as possible. Each rater will have a reviewer with a twofold responsibility. First, at the time the performance plan is designed, the reviewer will analyze it to ensure it supports the agency's and work unit's business plans and the Department's strategic plan. The review must ensure that the objectives and competencies are: measurable, within the influence of the employee, achievable (challenging yet reasonable and based on historical standards of performance) and realistic. The reviewer's second responsibility is to ensure that evaluation standards are applied consistently at the time of the final evaluation. The reviewer will review the evaluation before the rater presents it to the employee. Periodically, the Department Management Team will review the Department's program, unit business plans and individual performance plans for quality, accuracy and consistency. Pay decisions will be based on the evaluations completed by raters and reviewers and within system boundaries (Payment of awards for those currently at the maximum of their pay ranges is at the discretion of the Executive Director.) Raters are encouraged to consider multi-source assessment processes, where feasible, for evaluating employees.

f. Non-salary Awards

CDLE encourages the use of the non-salary incentives currently available in the state personnel system and in SPP-0042, Non-Salary Incentives, to supplement salary-based performance salary adjustments.

## **5. Performance Management**

a. The CDLE envisions performance management as a process for establishing and



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using a shared understanding of objectives and competencies in a participative culture to achieve success for both the organization and the individual. This process develops our “line of sight” or “focus”.

b. The first phase in implementing performance management is goal analysis. We receive our mission and objectives from the state legislature through the Governor’s office. These are the things we must do by statute and things we need to do to exist as an organization. We analyze these items to develop an understanding of what we should be doing. Everything else is discarded. We develop a mission statement and a vision statement giving an orientation for the future of our organization with organization values. The mission statement describes *what* we are to do. The values statement gives an understanding of *how* things are to be done. The Department Steering Committee decided that “Value” has too many definitions. Because our aim is to “establish a shared understanding” we are using this term (value) only in the context of the Department’s strategic plan and using the term “competencies” in Division business plans, work unit business plans and individual performance plans to describe key behaviors or *how* things are to be done. The last element is to measure progress with critical success factors. There are four basic standards used to measure work: quantity, quality, time and cost. These standards may be restated in terms that align better with our organization vision. Taken together the Department Mission, Vision, Values and Critical Success Factors are referred to as the “Strategic Plan”. The Department Strategic Plan gives general guidance and direction. It confirms old courses and sets new ones; it is a leadership document, it leads. The CDLE Strategic Plan is included as attachment 1.

c. The next step at the division and work unit level is to develop business plans. Division and work unit level business plans document mission, values and objectives expressed in terms of quantity, quality, cost and time (critical success factors); they are management documents, they manage things and people’s activities.

d. The final step in the planning phase is development of the individual performance plan (IPP). Employee involvement is encouraged in the writing of the performance plan. The employee will use the Department, Division, and work unit plans and align these with his/her primary job duties and responsibilities and his/her own intimate knowledge of the job to develop an individual performance plan. These documents should be made available to the employee in a timely manner so s/he may successfully complete the IPP. The employee will have a planning session with the supervisor to finalize the plan. There are four sections in the IPP but only the first two are scored. The maximum point total is 300: rated elements are scored with a “1”, does not meet standards; “2”, meets standards; and “3”, exceeds standards. **Total weights must equal 100 (%) for a maximum possible point total of 300.**

**The first section of the plan contains statements of objectives** to be accomplished during the year measured by the critical success factors of cost (lower cost per unit), time (reduce cycle time), quality (increase customer satisfaction) and quantity (more accessible products.) This section will be weighted in a range from sixty to ninety-five. It is not necessary that every task performed by an employee be listed on the IPP. The

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purpose of the plan is to give guidance to the employee about what must be done for the unit to achieve its objectives, help set priorities and enable the management staff to determine where an employee fits on the evaluation scale (Level 1, 2, or 3 )

**The second section is on competencies.** Competencies are how the objectives or job will be done and are expressed in terms such as communication, customer service, innovation, valuing diversity, and so on. The Department of Personnel and Administration (DPA) has designated five core competencies that will be included in all individual and team plans and evaluations and cannot be disregarded in the final overall rating for each employee. These competencies are 1) communication 2) interpersonal skills 3) customer service 4) accountability and 5) job knowledge. Employees in the Division of Employment and Training have seven core competencies developed through consultation with a team from the Mountain States Employers Council. These seven core competencies have been given informal approval to be used in place of the five state core competencies because they are “cross-walked” to the original five. They are, in a sense, expansions on the original five. Additional competencies may be included at the discretion of management. This section will be weighted in a range from five to forty. Multi-source assessment processes, where feasible, (for example, surveys, whether formal or informal) should be considered for evaluating employees to increase objectivity in evaluation. The numerical total of the scores given for the objectives and competencies will be the total score for the employee for the rated period. The total score will determine where an employee fits on the evaluation scale.

The score and any included commentary will impact decisions concerning pay, promotions, transfers, assignments, schooling and layoffs.

Supervisors and managers, with the concurrence of their appointing authority, determine the percentage of weight given for objectives and competencies.

The third section deals with personal development. The development plan is not given a numerical rating. This section does not impact pay but will contribute greatly to morale, future performance gains and development of supervisors/ managers for the state government.

The fourth section of the plan allows for documentation of several interim coaching and feedback reviews. These reviews are an opportunity to note progress and arrange for any additional support needed to accomplish the objectives or competencies. Both parties may record comments during interim reviews. There is one mandatory mid-cycle review but more frequent reviews are encouraged. The end-of-cycle review provides separate space for comments by the employee and the rating official.

All employees must receive a written evaluation at least annually. If an employee has been in position for ninety days or more and changes positions during the performance cycle, an interim rating must be completed and forwarded to the new appointing authority and OHR. If an employee has a change in rater during the rated period and the outgoing rater has been in that position for 90 days or more, the outgoing rater must complete an

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evaluation. At the end of the rated period all the evaluations will be prorated and totaled for the employee's total score. For example, three months with a rating of 290 ( $1/4$  of 290) = 72.5 and eight months with a rating of 245 ( $3/4$  of 245) = 183.75 are totaled for a score of 256. Employees' performance plans should be reviewed continually because objectives will be completed at different times during the year. Emphasis on measurement that is as objective as possible, we believe, is critical for the credibility of performance pay and performance management. It results in a year-round management system. The performance plan is intended to be a working document. A planning meeting between the supervisor and the employee must occur at the beginning of the cycle. Each performance plan will be reviewed between the rater and the rated employee a minimum of once during the rating period and documented in the plan. The rated employee as well as the rating official may arrange for additional reviews.

A Level 1 or "Needs Improvement" rating denoting unsatisfactory performance will result, at a minimum, in a performance improvement plan or a corrective action.

Performance plans for supervisors/ managers will have at least one objective or one competency evaluating the effectiveness of their performance management of their employees. All rater's will be evaluated on his or her performance management of employees.

A copy of CDLE's Performance Planning and Review Form is included as attachment 2.

- e. CDLE's Performance Management System will have some significant effects on Department employees:
  - 1) They will be rated more objectively
  - 2) They will have more control over their jobs
  - 3) They will be better informed about what is happening to them and their organization
  - 4) They will have more opportunities and incentives for personal development
  - 5) With more in-depth guidance and job knowledge they will have the tools, encouragement and incentive to make empowered decisions

## **6. Dispute Resolution Process.**

Included as Attachment 3.

## **7. Training.**

- a. The Employee Action Group on Training recommended to the CDLE management team that to give the Performance Pay System ( originally Colorado Peak Performance, CPP) the best chance of success all employees in the department should be trained in the system. To the greatest extent possible the manager/ supervisor of the employee should conduct the training. This method of training would accomplish three things; the leaders

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would become experts on the system, employees would understand and be able to function in the new system and employees would know that CPP has the support of management. Accordingly, CDLE Staff Development trained a cadre of about seventy leaders in performance pay, performance management and planning, tracking and reviewing individual performance. This cadre completed the basic training of the Department in April 1999. Unfortunately, the quality of this training was not consistent. Additional training was conducted by Staff Development. Subsequent individual training for new employees and supervisors in performance management and the dispute resolution process has been designated as mandatory.

b. The Employee Action Group for Training recommended that skills training to support PPS should be given to managers and supervisors. Additional training includes Business Plan Writing, Core Skills for Building Commitment, Conflict Resolution, Facilitating Improved Performance, Negotiation Skills, Problem Solving and Time Management. These courses are being offered on an ongoing basis for new supervisors and supervisors/managers being assigned to the department.

c. "Update Training" is done for CDLE staff whenever significant changes are made to the Department plan. CDLE Staff Development and the Office of Human Resources will conduct this training. Changes in the Performance Management System and in the Dispute Resolution Process will be explained and employees will have the opportunity to engage in a questions and answers session to clarify their understanding. OHR has conducted training for personnel involved in the Dispute Resolution Process and will repeat this training as necessary.

## **8. Summary.**

CDLE has conducted a structured implementation process that involved all elements of the Department and drew upon various resources such as "Best Practices" (DPA website), published works of private consultants, published experiences of large-scale businesses and management literature. We feel we have developed a performance management and performance pay system that is effective and equitable. This is a dynamic system. We encourage and welcome suggestions and advice for improvement. We have made changes to improve in the past and expect to continue to do so in the future. Our hope and intention is for Colorado to be the benchmark for State government performance throughout the United States of America.